

THE TIMES-DISPATCH

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and a business boom and extensive improvements are being made at the Normal School. Blackstone has just opened a new bank building and the money for a high school building to cost \$10,000 is in sight.

Bristol has subscribed \$47,000 towards the erection of a new Young Men's Christian Association Building to cost \$90,000.

These are a few industrial items picked up during the past several days; of course they do not tell the whole story, but they are significant of progress in all parts of the State. Virginia is getting ready for 1907.

Increased Cost of Living.

Living is getting to be a rather expensive luxury. Prices have been for some years advancing all along the line, without any such general increase in the salaries and wages of those who have to pay them. Figures compiled by the United States government, which we get by way of the New York Commercial, show that the cost of living has been mounting steadily since 1900, culminating in December, 1905, with an average whole-sale advance of nearly 16 per cent. over the closing years of the last century.

Comparing the 1905 average prices with the years since 1890 that show the lowest averages in each group of commodities, we find that the 1905 averages show farm products 88.8 per cent. higher than in 1890; food, and so forth, 29.7 per cent. higher than in 1890; clothes and clothing, 22.9 per cent. higher than in 1890; fuel and lighting, 39.4 per cent. higher than in 1890; metals and implements, 41.8 per cent. higher than in 1890; lumber and building materials, 41.4 per cent. higher than in 1890; drugs and chemicals, 24.1 per cent. higher than in 1890; housefurnishing goods, 21.5 per cent. higher than in 1890; and articles included in miscellaneous group, 23.4 per cent. higher than in 1890.

It costs, then, some 16 per cent. more to live now than it did in the most favorable period between 1890 and 1900. Increased incomes have come meantime to some classes of wage-earners, and possibly some of the farmers, shopkeepers, small manufacturers and the like have reaped benefit from the larger prices. Other workers have been less fortunate, however. The clerk and the school teacher draw their old salaries. It would seem to follow that their style of living must be inferior by 16 per cent. to what it was in the years of cheaper supplies.

Where is this sort of thing going to end? If prices continue to mount, how will the man with the fixed income continue to keep both ends meeting?

Assault on Carolina Poets.

The Norfolk Landmark calls the attention of the Charlotte Observer to a bare-faced attempt on the part of Harper's weekly to snatch laurels from the brow of one of the North Carolina's famous poets, the author of "I Seen Pa Coming, Stepping High."

We do not wish to crowd our Charlotte contemporary, but we must call its attention also to another outrage of similar character. Several days ago we had the honor to reproduce from the Observer that unspeakable lyric, entitled "Ode to Rocky River Springs," by another of North Carolina poets. We were pleased to see the Ode also reproduced in the columns of the Washington Post, but we had the sense of indignation when the Post undertook to match it with the following doggerel from the pen of one Richard Watson Gilder:

"Oh, the old place in the best place, I return to the scenes of my boyhood's cavortings. There is the old mill, and the purling brook, and the elm where the robins used to nest again."

How well I remember Tom Trott, and the picnic, and the time he kicked me in the pants. And the ride home through the trees on hay wagon, while Tom showed me some foot."

And then the pie and the jumbles and the doughnuts, and how mother used to wash my neck—"

Oh, there's no place like the old place, so far as I can see! Never touched it. There is but one Ode, and compared with Mr. Gilder's feeble imitation it is as Hyperion to a satyr. Ripple on, Rocky River, your fame is safe.

A Sea Level Canal.

The Senate committee on Inter-oceanic canals yesterday voted in favor of constructing a sea-level canal.

We should have been greatly surprised, had the committee voted otherwise. This canal is to be an expression of American skill and enterprise and nothing but the best will do. There is no question that the sea-level canal is the best and this nation demands it. The difference is only a matter of time and cost. As for the cost, the nation is too rich to feel it, and we can well afford to wait for the best.

We have wondered why it is the authorities have this spring permitted the defacing of property, particularly brick walls of prominent buildings in the heart of the city, by means of chalk marking advertising certain games. It is very ugly treatment toward the owners and offensive to the eye. The society formed to keep the city neat and inviting might take a hand and with an ordinance from the council the police could do the defacing and the pavement with lettering be cut enough—Augusta Chronicle.

That complaint is not confined to Staunton. There is hardly a building in Richmond with the corner exposed which does not bear the marks of the youthful vandals and sometimes the inscriptions are obscene.

It is hard to prevent this sort of vandalism by law. When at work the little chaps are shrewd enough to see that the cop is not in sight. The remedy is in home instructions and discipline; and there should be similar instructions in the public schools.

The Chicago Tribune prints a picture of a tangled mass of broken iron and cables. It is the picture of the ruins of the famous Ferris Wheel, which was one of the chief attractions of the Chicago and St. Louis Expositions. But it had accomplished its mission and was recently demolished by dynamite. Sic transiebat.

The city is to be congratulated upon

the fact that Monument Avenue is to be made of uniform width from Lombardy to the Boulevard. Alderman Blane has done excellent service in getting this measure through and is entitled to the thanks of the public for his enterprise.

While they had chicken only once a year at V. M. I., it appears that they had ducks very frequently at Williamsburg.

A city that "can't afford" to be prosperous ought to entertain a proposition to take a nerve tonic.

To be simultaneously boss of the U. S. Senate and father-in-law of Standard Oil is some potatoes for one Aldrich.

Clothes make the man and want of them the bather.

Now that they are calling him Mark Bryan, because it is so plain that he is willful.

Tillman maintains that it's easier to think even a rate bill than a fractured word.

The lie is like an official call in that it is commonly returned as soon as received.

In these days a man's word is not always as substantial as his United States bond.

As to that hoped for auditorium, it seems that our aldermen would rather have the money.

Luckily for some one in Washington, the duel is now regarded as obsolete.

Newspapers in clerical circles, these.

The Democratic Outlook.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—Your recent editorial with the foregoing caption doesn't appeal to a Democrat who hasn't yet had time to forget what happened to the reactionary, non-servative Parker campaign. It is certainly a remarkable proposition that be- lieved in a Republican President has occupied Democratic ground, and is at last doing something for the people, we must brand him as a "radical" and at once react to a dead and do-nothing conservatism. Is he the radical for his own cause he is pursuing predatory trusts and discriminating railroads? Would you have the Democratic party go into opposition to this policy of the opportunity which is willing to abandon principles and people for votes is not likely to get the votes. Perhaps the Parker debacle was not spectacular enough for the amusement of his- torians. The Roosevelt attitude toward trusts and railroads is not radicalism, but Democracy. The Democrats in Congress are not likely to support him, for if they should act differently, the next election would be a nemesis and annihilation. The Bryan interpretation of Democracy is the only thing, saving its fragmentary adoption by Roosevelt, which accurately reflects the spirit of the age. One great man leads, perhaps not the party, but the Democracy of the hour. "Back to Jefferson," says the slogan, calculated to inspire people who are not in the habit of going to graveyards for cheerful inspiration. Nobody imagines that if Jefferson were to rise he would advocate the "let-alone" and "hands-off" policy toward licentious corporations. This preposterous chauvinism accounts for the paucity of great men and leaders in our party. Leaders do not rise from cemeteries, but descend from heaven. A great man, a leader of men, is the product of the ideal forces of his time, the alive elemental, urgent, imminent forces which find mighty arms in the van of human progress. How many leaders have we who exhibit this birthright?

We are to-day witnesses of a most remarkable spectacle—the great mass of the people demanding economic equality, and yet unwilling to trust the party with the administration of its own doctrine. If the Republicans have stolen our thunder, for this is a great man and leader, the thunder who are able to hurl it. Behind all the squeaking voices of a contemptible opportunism recoils the deep heart of millions of workers, demanding economic equality, not the nostrum of the levellers, but equality of opportunity, a condition which the intelligent man knows doesn't exist in this pretentious of money, monopoly, corruption, rapacity and consequent serfdom of the working masses. Socialism is not this word, but a profoundly significant exaggeration, but Jefferson and his compatriots solved the problem of civil liberty well enough. Economic liberty is the essence of our times, demanding a new Jefferson, a new solution. Let the Democratic party address itself to this great task and its present outlook upon heaps of rubbish in the backyard of obsolete values may be exchanged for something a little more inspiring. BENJAMIN C. MOOMAW.

Ben, Va.

Voice of the People.

Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—In helping San Francisco it should be borne in mind that we entire section of the city, where people did the housework for personal wear and for household fabrics was wiped out. Up town west of Van Ness Avenue, there are no stores worth the mention. The Red Cross people should have looked for clothing for babies—children and women, particularly—along with any house furnishing fabrics, towels, sheets, blankets, comforters, even to torn rag and dish rags. The money will be soon spent and we have to go back to Chicago and New York, but any half-worn or laid aside garment for any sized or conditioned person, any old towel, wash rag, or even an old pillow case to have holes cut in the bottom or corners of the baby's head and arms makes a clean and prompt garment for an infant or small child. People who never were in a wiped out town (and I have been in two fires in the West, where we slept on the floor after the fire) cannot imagine what it means. Can't Richmond start a house to house gathering of old-faded garments, etc., even to rag dolls for little girls whose dolls were smothered or burned. San Francisco will be long in rebuilding. The section north and south of south was each occupied by multitudes of good people left penniless and without employment, as the business part of the city was wiped out clean. Very poor persons, and there were very many in San Francisco, could not leave even on a free pass, for they had no home or friends to go to and were and are moneyless. It would never do to take new born infants, babies and small children into the ruins of the city, and the Valley to die of heat and malaria. All who can leave the great valleys and go to the seashore or into the high hills in summer. What these people need is half-worn out clothing and any article which will wear and last and be able to spend the little money for goods bought from a San Francisco or California store. Richmond, Va. ST. G. C. B.

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